

REMARKS

Claims 1-25 are pending in the application.

Claims 1-25 have been rejected.

Claims 1-2, 5-17, 20-22, and 24-25 have been amended. Support for these amendments can be found on pages 12-14 and 17 of the specification. No new matter has been added.

Rejection of Claims under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1, 3-4, 6-12, 14-16, 18-19, 21, and 23-24 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by “RFC 2866”. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

With respect to amended claim 1, the cited art fails to anticipate, teach, or suggest creating a unique session identifier for a user, wherein the unique session identifier is unique with respect to a plurality of network access servers; and providing the unique session identifier to an Authentication, Authorization, and Accounting (AAA) module, wherein each of the network access servers is configured to request AAA processing from the AAA module.

In the rejection of the previous version of claim 1, the Office Action cites sections 1.2, 2, and 5 of RFC 2866. These sections recite, in part:

“Each service provided by the NAS to a dial-in user constitutes a session, with the beginning of the session defined as the point wherein service is first provided and the end of the session defined as the point where service is ended. A user may have multiple sessions in parallel or series if the NAS supports that, with each session generating a separate start and stop accounting record with its own Acct-Session-Id.” (Section 1.2, definition of “session”).

“When a client is configured to use RADIUS Accounting, at the start of service delivery it will generate an Accounting Start packet describing the type of service being delivered and the user it is being delivered to, and will send that to the RADIUS Accounting server, which will send back an acknowledgement that the packet has been received.” (Section 2)

[The Acct-Session-Id] attribute is a unique Accounting ID to make it easy to match start and stop records in a log file. The start and stop records for a given session MUST have the same Acct-Session-Id. An Accounting-Request packet MUST have an Acct-Session-Id.” (Section 5.5).

These sections of RFC 2866 describe that a NAS can provide services to dial-in users in the form of sessions, and that each Accounting-Request packet must have an Acct-Session-Id. The Office Action appears to be equating the Acct-Session-Id with the session ID recited in claim 1. In contrast to claim 1, however, the cited sections of RFC 2866 neither teach nor suggest that the Acct-Session-Id is unique with respect to a plurality of network access servers. Furthermore, these sections of the RFC also fail to teach or suggest an arrangement in which the Acct-Session-Id is provided to an Authentication, Authorization, and Accounting (AAA) module that receives AAA processing requests from each of several network access servers. For at least the foregoing reasons, claim 1 is patentable over the cited art, as are dependent claims 3-4. Claims 6-12, 14-16, 18-19, 21, and 23-24 are patentable over the cited art for similar reasons.

It is further noted that the cited art would not be expected to teach or suggest a system in which a session ID is unique with respect to several network access servers. As noted in the specification, existing systems (e.g., as illustrated in FIGs. 1A and 1B) operated in situations in which it is “possible for the AAA server 30a to receive n session id values, where each of the n session id values corresponds to a different NAS 28 but is the same number. The AAA server 30a can easily handle this condition because the AAA server 30a associates each session id value with the corresponding NAS 28 based upon a unique NAS address for each NAS. Because each of these duplicative session id’s is coming from a different NAS address, the AAA Server 30a can distinguish between the NAS’s 28a-28n when managing the sessions involved.” Specification, p. 10. Thus, existing techniques were available to handle the situation in which multiple network access servers communicated the same session identifier to the same AAA server. No need for the technique recited in claim 1, in which a session identifier is unique with respect to multiple network access servers, has been shown in any of the cited art.

Rejection of Claims under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 2, 5, 13, 17, 20, 22 and 25 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over “RFC 2866”. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection. These claims are patentable over the cited art for reasons similar to those provided above with respect to claim 1.

Additionally with respect to claim 2, the cited art fails to teach, or suggest creating the unique session identifier by appending a unique identifier, which is associated with one of the

network access servers, to a local session identifier. On page 9, the Office Action equates the “NAS-IP-Address” described in RFC 2866 with the unique identifier, and the “NAS-Port” and “NAS-Port-Type” described in RFC 2866 with the local session identifier. The Office Action also states: “It would have been obvious to... append a unique identifier associated with an access server to a local session identifier since ‘RFC 2866’ suggests that any sort of method of generating a unique session identifier may be used... and that local session identifier may be used to delineate between services provided. One... also knows that ports are used to identify certain services and that a local session identifier such as a port number is appended to a unique identifier such as an IP address.”

Applicant notes that on page 16 of RFC 2866, generation of the Acct-Session-ID (which the Office Action is equating with the unique session identifier of claim 2) is described as follows: “For example, one implementation uses a string with an 8-digit upper case hexadecimal number, the first two digits increment on each reboot (wrapping every 256 reboots) and the next 6 digits counting from 0 for the first person logging in after a reboot up to $2^{24}-1$, about 16 million.”

The technique described in RFC 2866 for generating Acct-Session-ID generates a unique number (on the generating device) for each person logging in, based upon the order in which people log in. This allows the NAS to differentiate between different sessions. Simply using the NAS’s port or port type identifier as a local session identifier, as described in the rejection of claim 2, would not allow the NAS to differentiate between different people who have logged in via the NAS, since different people would very likely be associated with the same port and/or port type. Appending the NAS’s IP address to the port or port type identifier (again, as described in the rejection of claim 2) would still not provide any such differentiation, and thus the identifier formed by appending the IP address would not allow the NAS to identify different sessions for different people who have logged in. Accordingly, appending the NAS’s IP address to the NAS’s port and/or port type identifier does not provide a useable Acct-Session-ID, as described in RFC 2866. If a proposed modification would render the prior art feature inoperable for its intended purpose, then there is no suggestion or motivation to make the proposed modification. *In re Gordon*, 733 F.2d 900 (Fed. Cir. 1984). For at least this reason, claim 2 is further patentable over the cited art.

Furthermore, RFC 2866 does not teach or suggest any particular encoding other than the one quoted above. More specifically, the cited portions RFC 2866 clearly fail to teach or suggest

the particular technique recited in claim 2. The Office Action presents the opinion that, because other encodings (none of which are taught or suggested in the cited art) might be used with RFC 2866, RFC 2866 somehow suggests the technique recited in claim 2. However, this opinion is not a proper basis of rejection. The Examiner has the burden "to produce the factual basis for the rejection of an application under sections 102 and 103." *In re Warner*, 154 USPQ 173, 177 (C.C.P.A. 1967), *cert. denied*, 389 U.S. 1057 (1968). "To imbue one of ordinary skill in the art with knowledge of the invention... when no prior art reference or references of record convey or suggest that knowledge, is to fall victim to the insidious effect of a hindsight syndrome wherein that which only the inventor taught is used against its teacher." *W.L. Gore & Assocs., Inc. v. Garlock, Inc.*, 721 F.2d 1540, 1553, 220 USPQ 303, 312-13 (Fed.Cir.1983).

CONCLUSION

In view of the amendments and remarks set forth herein, the application and the claims therein are believed to be in condition for allowance without any further examination and a notice to that effect is solicited. Nonetheless, should any issues remain that might be subject to resolution through a telephonic interview, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at 512-439-5087.

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as First Class Mail in an envelope addressed to: Mail Stop Amendment, COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS, P. O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on August 30, 2005

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Respectfully submitted,

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